



Ryeland Road Arsenic Site

Womelsdorf, Pennsylvania

Site Description

The eight acre Ryeland Road Arsenic site is in a residential area located on both sides of Ryeland Road in the rural town of Womelsdorf, Berks County, Pennsylvania. Three homes were built in the late 1970s on land which was originally the location of a former chemical manufacturing plant that was destroyed by fire in 1940. Another part of the Site was used by the former plant as a waste disposal area and is currently a partially developed vacant lot. Contaminated soil is present to a lesser extent on twelve additional residential properties.

Current Site Status and Cleanup Actions to Date

- Between 1985 and 1989, EPA initiated a removal action to excavate and dispose of approximately 2,400 cubic yards of arsenic and lead contaminated waste material. EPA removed contaminated soil from three residential properties north of West Ryeland Road. Arsenic and lead contaminated soil was found at the surface to depths greater than two feet.
- In 2001, EPA removed 4,470 tons of contaminated soil off-site for disposal; and, in 2002, two feet of contaminated soil was excavated and replaced with clean fill to address the arsenic and lead in surface soils and temporarily reduce the risk to residents.
- In January 2006, a cleanup plan was signed. EPA will [excavate](#) (2pp, 530K) 94,000 tons of soil containing arsenic and lead, and will remove contaminated sediments from downgradient areas to eliminate the threat to human health and the environment.
- Arsenic is leaching from the soil into shallow groundwater and a wetland area, and impacting sediments and biota for almost one mile.
- EPA, through an interagency agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is negotiating with residents to purchase their homes and relocate them so that EPA can excavate the contaminated soil beneath the properties. EPA has made offers to two property owners and will meet with two additional property owners in mid September 2006.
- EPA awarded contracts to begin soil excavation in September 2006.

Current Funding Status

- In Fiscal Year 2006, EPA allocated \$6.0 million for the first phase of the soil cleanup and the purchase of the residential properties.
- Region 3 plans to accelerate the soil cleanup under a two year schedule. Sediment cleanup will proceed in the third year.
- EPA signed the Superfund State Contract with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on May 3, 2006.

Key Accomplishments

- EPA removed approximately 2,400 cubic yards of arsenic and lead contaminated waste material, and also removed 4,470 tons of contaminated soil off-site for disposal.
- The Record of Decision (ROD), describing the selected remedy for the Site, was signed in 2006.
- To date, EPA has spent \$6.0 million for the first phase of the soil cleanup and the purchase of the residential properties,

For more information on the projects at this site, please read the [Ryeland Road Arsenic Site Fact Sheet](#) on the Region 3 Superfund Web site.



- In July 2006, EPA agreed to spend \$1.0 million to purchase and demolish the homes of three families who currently reside on properties contaminated with potentially dangerous levels of arsenic and lead.